

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

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R 281455Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9134

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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PRETORIA ALSO FOR AMBASSADOR LOW

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDEV PINT RH

SUBJ: RHODESIA: NKOMO HITS AT TRIBALISM

1. ADDRESSING A CROWD OF ZAPU SUPPORTERS IN LUSAKA AUGUST 27, ZAPU LEADER JOSHUA NKOMO HIT OUT AT TRIBALISM BOTH WITHIN HIS ORGANIZATION AND AMONG ZIMBABWEANS IN GENERAL. NKOMO SAID SINCE ALL ZIMBABWEANS HAD THE SAME GOAL--REMOVING THE SMITH REGIME--THEY SHOULD NOT DIVIDE THEMSELVES INTO TRIBAL CAMPS. HE CHIDED THOSE WHO TALKED UNITY BUT PRACTICED TRIBALISM. STATING THAT A POINT HAD BEEN REACHED IN THE STRUGGLE FOR ZIMBABWE WHERE TRIBALISM COULD NOT BE TOLERATED, NKOMO SAID THAT ANY MEMBERS OF ZAPU WHO DID NOT FULLY BACK UNITY OF ALL ZIMBABWEANS SHOULD RESIGN.

2. IN AN APPARENT REFERENCE TO THE GENERALLY PERCEIVED TRIBAL
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MAKEUP OF ZANU AND ZAPU, NKOMO SAID HE DID NOT WANT TO SEE A SITUATION IN WHICH SHONAS WOULD DESCRIBE NDEBELE AS NOT TRUE ZIMBABWEANS BECAUSE THEY ORIGINALLY CAME FROM SOUTH AFRICA. IN A QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION, HE TOLD THE CROWD THAT ZAPU SUPPORTED ROBERT MUGABE, LEADER OF ZANU, IN HIS CALL FOR A GENERAL CONGRESS TO MERGE THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS AND ELECT A SINGLE LEADER.

3. THE ZAPU LEADER ALSO TOLD HIS AUDIENCE THAT ZIMBABWEANS INVOLVED IN THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION OF THEIR COUNTRY WOULD CONTINUE GETTING MILITARY ASSISTANCE FROM THE EAST, WHETHER OR NOT THE "CAPITALISTIC" WEST LIKED IT. HE SAID HE DID NOT CARE IF THIS LEAD TO BEING BRANDED AS COMMUNISTS.

4. COMMENT: NKOMO'S COMMENTS ON TRIBALISM WERE PROBABLY MAINLY DIRECTED AT CONTINUING TENSIONS BETWEEN ZAPU AND ZANU, ALBEIT THAT TRIBAL-BASED DIVISIONS HAVE CAUSED DIFFICULTIES WITHIN HIS OWN ORGANIZATION. HIS REMARKS NOTWITHSTANDING, TRIBALISM LIKELY WILL REMAIN A MAJOR STUMBLING BLOCK IN THE WAY OF UNITY BETWEEN THE TWO WINGS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT.
CLINGERMAN

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